Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

—1 John 3:18
Dear Congregational Leader,

Red roses, heart-shaped boxes of chocolate, cards & flowers — it must be Valentine’s Day, or the commercialized version of it, at least! The actual origin of the day is far from romantic. Short version: Martyrs.

But the heart of Valentine’s Day — the portion that focuses on love, kindness, affection, love and charity — looks a lot like our friend Salai, pictured on the cover, as well as all the donors who helped provide her with the water buffalo that brought her joy and, she believes, saved her life.

Salai represents just one of many women and families in India who have received a water buffalo, thanks to Outreach donors. Having a buffalo handy has enabled her to provide milk for herself and her extended family, sell the additional milk for a profit, and rent out her buffalo’s pulling power to others in her community who have fields that need tilling. Besides the happiness, self-sufficiency and support she has been able to pass on to others as a result of this community program, Salai’s buffalo’s offspring represent more than just good vibes.

Salai’s buffalo gave birth to three calves over the years, each of which fetched a considerable amount of money at market upon reaching maturity. When Salai fell ill, the proceeds from selling one of her calves provided the money she needed to pay for her medical expenses. “My buffalo saved my life,” she tells us. “Without being able to sell the calf, I would not have been able to pay for treatment, and I would’ve died.”

While we might not think of a water buffalo as life-savers, each gift given selflessly with unconditional commitment to the well being of humanity makes life simpler and sweeter for recipients, and serves as an ongoing reminder that we are all on this earth to help one another, whenever possible.

What if we made it a conscious ritual to love others as ourselves, and to expand our love and devotion to the world every day? What if every day was as full of love as Valentine’s Day? Together, we can realize this dream by adopting this scriptural principle from Romans 12:9-10, which counsels: “Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.” Simple and sweet.

Thank you for partnering with us in spreading love and life to so many around the world.

Your friends at Outreach International

Please share this poster and message with your congregation and post it in a prominent place to remind everyone of the life-saving good we can accomplish together.